

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 089701
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TO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
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BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

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TAGS: PARM, CSCE, UR, EEC, TU

SUBJECT: US/EC PRESIDENCY DIALOGUE: DANISH AMBASSADOR'S
CALL ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST
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PAGE 02 STATE 089701

BEGIN SUMMARY DANISH AMBASSADOR BORCH AS REPRESENTATIVE OF
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY CALLED ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY VEST
APRIL 5, 1978 TO ELICIT LATTER'S VIEW ON CURRENT STATE
U.S.-U.S.S.R. RELATIONS, STATUS OF ADMINISTRATION'S
EFFORTS TO END TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO AND RESULTS OF CSCE.
ASSISTANT SECRETARY CHARACTERIZED U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS

AS CONTAINING POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ELEMENTS WITH SALT
PROGRESS ON POSITIVE SIDE AND SOVIET AFRICAN VENTURES
AND CONTINUED DETAINMENT OF SHCHARANSKIY LEADING NEGATIVE
ELEMENTS. ON QUESTION OF POSSIBILITY FOR CONCLUSION OF SALT
AGREEMENT, MR. VEST STATED ADMINISTRATION REMAINED
OPTIMISTIC AND IF ALL WENT WELL A NEW ACCORD MIGHT BE
INITIALED BY MID-SUMMER. END SUMMARY

1. AMBASSADOR BORCH OPENED MEETING SAYING HE WOULD LIKE
TO HEAR U.S. OVERVIEW OF EAST/WEST RELATIONS IN WAKE OF
BELGRADE CONFERENCE. WHAT HAD BEEN EFFECT OF DISAGREEMENTS
IN MID-EAST AND AFRICA ON OVERALL US/SOV TIES AND, IN
PARTICULAR, ON SALT NEGOTIATIONS? DID PRESIDENT'S RECENT
SPEECH SIGNIFY CHANGE IN CHARACTER OF RELATIONS WITH
MOSCOW OR WAS IT MERELY ONE OF A SERIES OF UPS AND DOWNS?

IN REPLY MR. VEST STATED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO SUBSTAN-
TIAL CHANGE IN THE U.S./SOVIET RELATIONSHIP BUT ADDED
THAT RELATIONS HAD RECENTLY BEEN MORE UNEVEN THAN IN MID-
AUTUMN OF 1977. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE HE NOTED THAT SALT
TALKS ARE MOVING FORWARD WHILE PROGRESS IS ALSO BEING
MADE IN DISCUSSIONS ON A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN AND
CONTROL OF CONVENTIONAL ARMAMENTS.

2. SOVIET AFRICAN VENTURES AND THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF
SHCHARANSKIY WERE CHARACTERIZED AS MOST SERIOUS
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PAGE 03 STATE 089701

NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF U.S./SOVIET RELATIONS AT THE MOMENT.
THE USSR HAS NOT GENERALLY BEEN RESPONSIVE TO AMERICAN
OVERTURES FOR RESTRAINT IN ITS AFRICAN POLICY AND HAVE
EVEN TOLD US THAT THE QUESTION OF CUBAN TROOPS IN AFRICA
IS MATTER FOR BILATERAL DISCUSSION BETWEEN WASHINGTON
AND HAVANA. NEVERTHELESS, RECENT SOVIET/CUBAN SUPPORTED
MILITARY ACTION IN OGADEN REGION WAS HALTED AT SOMALI
FRONTIER. ON HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION WE COULD NOT IGNORE
CONTINUED SERIOUS SOVIET ABUSES AND MR. VEST CAUTIONED
THAT THERE WOULD BE CONSEQUENCES IF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLA-
TIONS "GOT OUT OF HAND." DURING HIS UPCOMING VISIT TO
MOSCOW, SECRETARY VANCE WOULD BE ADDRESSING HIMSELF TO
BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP.

3. IN RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S QUERY AS TO WHY SOVIET
POLICY WAS SHOWING AN INCREASED INCLINATION TOWARDS
FOREIGN ADVENTURES, MR. VEST REPLIED THAT MOSCOW AGING
LEADERSHIP MIGHT BE AT LEAST PARTLY RESPONSIBLE. WHILE
THERE WAS NO QUESTION THAT BREZHNEV AND HIS ASSOCIATES
RETAINED A KEEN INTEREST IN THE CONCLUSION OF A SALT
AGREEMENT, IT APPEARED THAT THIS LEADERSHIP DID NOT
POSSESS THE HIGH DEGREE OF CONTROL IT ENJOYED TWO YEARS

AGO. THIS LEFT MORE ROOM FOR SUBORDINATE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THE INTENSIFIED AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT. THE KREMLIN'S INTENSE CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE NEUTRON BOMB, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS CHARACTERIZED AS A TYPICAL PROPAGANDA EFFORT. WHILE IT WAS BOTHERSOME IT DID NOT HAVE THE GEOPOLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN AFRICA.

4. AMBASSADOR BORCH RECALLED THAT WHEN DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSEN VISITED WASHINGTON IN NOVEMBER 1977 SECRETARY VANCE HAD BEEN FAIRLY OPTIMISTIC ON THE POSSIBILITY FOR AN EARLY CONCLUSION OF A NEW SALT AGREEMENT. DID THE SECRETARY STILL RETAIN THIS VIEW? MR. VEST ANSWERED THAT THE FORECAST GIVEN TO ANDERSEN REMAINED CURRENT. WE ARE NOW AT THE STAGE WHERE WE CAN TALK ABOUT
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PAGE 04 STATE 089701

THE INITIALLING OF THE FINAL AGREEMENT. IF ALL WENT WELL THIS COULD TAKE PLACE IN THE SUMMER, FOLLOWING THE SECRETARY'S UPCOMING VISIT TO MOSCOW AND A CONTEMPLATED

RETURN VISIT BY FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO ABOUT ONE MONTH LATER. AS TO THE POSSIBILITY OF A BREZHNEV-CARTER MEETING IN CONNECTION WITH UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT BEGINNING IN LATE MAY, MR. VEST REPLIED THAT WE DID NOT KNOW AT THIS STAGE WHETHER BREZHNEV WOULD ATTEND THIS SESSION OR IF IT MIGHT SERVE AS THE OCCASION FOR A SUMMIT MEETING.

5. SWITCHING TO THE QUESTION OF U.S. RELATIONS WITH TURKEY, AMBASSADOR BORCH INQUIRED ABOUT THE ADMINISTRATION'S RECENT INITIATIVE TO RESUME MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND ASKED ABOUT THE CHANCES OF OBTAINING CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. MR. VEST ANSWERED THE ADMINISTRATION INTENDED TO FIGHT VERY HARD TO OBTAIN CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF ITS PROPOSAL. WHILE IT WAS TOO EARLY TO TELL WHAT THE OUTCOME OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS WOULD BE THERE SEEMED TO BE A GENERAL FEELING IN THE CONGRESS THAT SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE ABOUT TURKEY. HOWEVER, THERE WERE THE NEGATIVE FACTORS OF CONGRESSIONAL PREOCCUPATION WITH PANAMA AND ENERGY LEGISLATION AND THE FACT THAT THIS WAS AN ELECTION YEAR.

6. IN CLOSING, THE AMBASSADOR ASKED IF THERE HAS BEEN AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MR. VEST TO TAKE A "COOL AND DETACHED" LOOK AT RESULTS OF CSCE. MR. VEST REPLIED THAT THE CONFERENCE HAD ENDED PRETTY MUCH AS HE HAD EXPECTED. CSCE WAS PROVING TO BE A HAIR SHIRT FOR THE SOVIETS AND WE INTENDED TO HOLD THEIR FEET TO THE FIRE. FOR MOSCOW TO ABANDON THE CSCE PROCESS AT THIS POINT WOULD BE
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PAGE 05 STATE 089701

EXTREMELY AWKWARD, SINCE THIS WOULD IMPLY A DIMINISHED
INTEREST IN DETENTE. VANCE

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